

Andrew Jackson to John Christmas McLemore, June 27, 1831, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN C. MCLEMORE.1

1 N. Y. Hist. Soc.

Rip Raps, June 27, 1831.

My *D'r Sir*: I have come here to spend a few days with my friend Judge Overton for the benefit of his, and my own health, and to have a little rest from the bustle of business, and the throng of strangers, that are unusualy great at this Season in the city, and the repainting of my dwelling, which was, I thought, very injurious to my health, and made me very subject to my excrutiating head ache.

The unexpected, and extraordinary conduct of Mr. Branch first, and then Ingham, assuming the character of the paritheat who flies and throws their poisoned darts behind, has astonished many, altho not me. I knew for some time, that Treachery existed some where in my Cabinet, and that it was not in either VanBuren, or faithful Eaton. I always knew that the attack upon Eaton, was, intended to effect me, not Major Eaton. This has shewn itself, or why has the persecution been secretly carried on by Ingham thro the Telegraph, since Eaton has resigned, only to serve the mean vindictive and cowardly course of Mr. Calhoun. I always knew this and I as well knew *lately*, that Ingham and Branch were his puppits, secretly manevreing, to destroy Van Buren, and prostrate me. But altho in 1819, Mr. Monroe, through the advice of Calhoun, got Mr. John Rhea to apply to me, and get me, to burn his confidential letter to me, written in January 1818, in reply to my confidential letter to Mr. Monroe of the 6th of Janry 1818, still I have, *now*, in my

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possession the positive statement of Mr. Rhea,² that my confidential letter was shewn to him, by Mr. Munroe, and he was requested to write, and did write to me, that the view I had taken *was, approved*, by the President. I have also the statement of Judge Overton, who had Rheas letter before him, with the other confidential letters, when he wrote the defence of the Executive, and his commanding Genl, and I have seen a letter from a Gentleman of high standing in South Carolina, saying that he has Calhouns letter, before I entered Florida, saying that Florida ought not only to be seized, but held as an indemnity for her depredations etc. etc. When the nation are informed that this was his course, such was his order, to me, a chart Blanch, what curses must not a moral and virtuous people pronounce on a man, (when he expected I was in my grave) would move my arrest, for the disobedience of orders, which he knew I had fulfilled to a tittle, and that too, agreeable to the expressed views of the government.

² No such statement has been found in the Jackson MSS., unless Jackson referred to Rhea's letter to Monroe of June 3, p. 288n., *ante*.

Calhoun and his puppits, male and female, have been secretly at work to destroy me, and they have been too successful, to blind my connections and part of my family, and would have effected it, if I had not reorganised my Cabinet. But my providence takes care of me, and I will triumph over all those base men, with all the secrete intrigues of Calhoun, and his Satilites. Ingham has damnd. himself forever. he remained under the pretext of finishing the standard of our weights, and measures, whilst he was corresponding with his master, and putting forth through the Telegraph all his secrete slanders against Mrs. Eaton. He was caught, and I enclose you a paper containing the correspondence between Eaton, and him, and his letter [to] me, after he had *fled* from the city, with the declarations of the gentlemen who he charged in his letter. Any man who would tell such *positive falshoods* against men in high offices, it is not to wondered that he would be mean enough, for political effect, to slander a female and fly guarded, from that punishment, that all such merit.

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I have always viewed those who secretly pirate upon female character worse than the pirate on the high seas, and as the latter is considered the enemy of the human race, the former is worse, and ought to be treated accordingly. When you hear the whole farce, it is one the most cowardly and shameful ever recorded. I have a history of the flight by a Gentleman who travelled in view of them in the mail stage, breakfasted at the same tavern, where they placed centinels at the door, whilst eating, and sat to table with their arms. This force was commanded by the *redoubtable Col. Towson* aided by six, janisaries. Whilst Major Eaton was passing thro the city alone, no one friend near him that he knew of, and none armed, unless the Major was. It is true I believe, if he had met Mr. Ingham he would have chastised him, and as far as I have investigated the matter, the plot of assasination was by Inghams party, to assasinate Eaton, but it was in unison with Calhouns whole intrigue, cry plot, plot, where the plot is only on his side. It corresponds well with his intrigue with the female gossips of the city, who raised the cry of W. W. when some of his gossips could not today, produce as fair a character as Mrs. Eaton, and against whose chastity more had been said than ever had been against Mrs. Eaton, but Eaton was my friend, it was necessary to drive from me if possible, all who would not bend to Calhouns ambitious views, and to accomplish this object, if I would not bend to his view, I was to be crushed.

Calhoun is still going with secrete intrigues to injure me. I have just been furnished with extracts of letters he has been writing to some of his friends in Tennessee who are out for public favor. I have only time to give one, the ballance are in the same stile. extract from a letter written by Calhoun to——3 of the 5th of March 1831. "It is however really mortifying to think, that the President has permitted himself to be so compleatly duped by *his old, and deadly enemies* , against his early and steady friends." (Does he mean himself) "the world has been deceived as to his real character". Again 10th of April 1831 he says, "I concur with you in thinking, that we have all been mistaken in the true character of Genl. Jackson. What was ever so strange, and indicates greater weakness, and want of sound feelings, than that in the space of two years he should place himself in the hands of those who, had

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secretely so bitterly opposed him, and should transfer his resentment against his uniform friends and this has been effected by artifices at once shallow and profligate." 22

3 Name is omitted in the letter.

This is in unison with all his falshoods and hypocrisy! Who but him has secretely, but under profession of friendship attempted to injure me. Mr. Crawford was openly opposed, and hostile to me, Calhoun secretely, until his hypocrisy and duplicity was unveiled. When have I diserted an old friend, *never*. A man thus prone to duplicity and lying and the dishonorable conduct of secretely slandering, can never succeed, and in due time, I will expose him and his secrete conspirators, to the full glare of the world, and to infamy.

Present me to your family affectionately, and let me hear how my son progresses with his education. Let me know how you get on with your business, You have my best wishes and shall have my aid if needed, as far as my means will permit. Say to my son I wish him to return to me so soon as he can attend to the business I sent him on and believe me your friend. Judge Overton is mending fast.